

VZCZCXRO3919

OO RUEHAO RUEHCD RUEHGA RUEHGD RUEHGR RUEHHA RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHMT
RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHQU RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC

DE RUEHTG #0850/01 2402217

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

O 282217Z AUG 09

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0562

INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE

RUEAHND/COMJTF-B SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

RUEAHND/CDRJTFB SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RULGPSU/COMSOC SOUTH IMMEDIATE

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 000850

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [MARR](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: HONDURAS COUP SITREP #53 08/28/2009 AS OF
15:00 LOCAL (17:00 EDT)

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 841 AND OTHERS

DEMONSTRATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITY

¶1. (SBU) As of 11:00 local (13:00 EDT), a medium sized group of pro-Zelaya demonstrators had gathered at the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) on Blvd. Santa Fe and had moved to Colonia Polo Paz for a memorial service for a protestor that was shot and killed during a demonstration at that site on July 30.

¶2. (SBU) As of 19:30 local (21:30 EDT) Thursday August 27, a small demonstration in Comayagua with 600 protestors led by president Zelaya's wife had peacefully disbanded.

¶3. (U) Today's local press included four front page stories providing more details on the car bomb that police found and dismantled on the morning of Thursday August 27. Today's reports state that a local security guard witnessed an individual park an allegedly stolen red Volkswagen at 0500 local (0700 EDT) on August 27. Minutes later, a parking attendant left his office to look for the driver and ask him to move his car. As he approached the car, the attendant saw a propane container connected to a kitchen timer, and proceeded to call the police, who in turn called the bomb squad. The reports state that the national police and the bomb squad entered the car by breaking one of the windows and safely dismantled the explosives, with which they also found two 9-volt batteries and a black bag containing two gallons of gasoline and two cylinders of Freon. Headlines in the local press refer to the driver of the car as a terrorist and cite previous attacks performed by alleged Zelaya supporters after the June 28 coup, including the burning of a bus and a fast food restaurant.

¶4. (U) Local press this morning included reports about the future of collaboration between the Honduran and US governments. Reports expressed concern about the possibility that the USG will define the coup as a military coup, in which case Honduras will lose all US assistance, including \$215 million in aid from the MCC (sic). In the opinion section of a local paper, Dominican Republic President Leonel Fernandez, call for Honduras, removal from CAFTA-DR is

portrayed as a ploy for economic advantage for his country.

¶5. (U) Local press reports included excerpts of a letter criticizing the Consular Section closing of non-emergency nonimmigrant visa (NIV) services, circulated by Congressman Connie Mack (R-FL) and signed by six additional Republican members and was sent to Secretary of State Clinton on August 26.

Infrastructure and Communications

¶6. (U) As a result of an attack on its transmission equipment, pro-Zelaya television station Channel 36 remains off the air.

¶7. (SBU) Toncontin International Airport in Tegucigalpa (TGU) and San Pedro Sula airport remain open.

¶8. (U) Most of Honduras' land borders with Guatemala and El Salvador are currently open to commercial and private vehicles. The borders between Honduras and Nicaragua have been closed intermittently since Friday, July 24.

¶9. (U) There are no reports of abnormal public utility outages in the country.

Consular and Embassy Operations

TEGUCIGALP 00000850 002 OF 002

¶10. (U) The Embassy is open for normal business on Friday, August 28 with one exception. The Consular Section will be closed to non-emergency nonimmigrant visa (NIV) services until further notice. Barring any changes in the security situation, the Consular Section will remain open for other consular services until further notice.

¶11. (U) The Consular Section continues to receive sporadic inquiries from AmCits regarding the political situation. Post circulated a Warden Message Monday, August 10. The Consular Section continues to regularly update ACS information on the Embassy website.

¶12. (SBU) The next EAC meeting time has not been determined.
HENSHAW